United Nations A/59/552

General Assembly

Distr.: General
3 November 2004

Original: English

Fifty-ninth session
Agenda item 108
Programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005

Review of the structure and functions of all liaison offices or representation in New York of organizations headquartered elsewhere funded from the regular budget

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of the Secretary-General on the review of the structure and functions of all liaison offices or representation in New York of organizations headquartered elsewhere funded from the regular budget (A/59/395). During its consideration of the matter, the Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General.

2. The report was prepared pursuant to paragraph 47 of General Assembly resolution 58/270 of 23 December 2003. It includes a description of the functions and the level of staff resources of liaison offices and representation in New York funded from the regular budget. Paragraph 2 of document A/59/395 includes a list of these offices. Upon request, the Committee was provided with information on all the posts and level of staff of these offices, including those funded from extrabudgetary resources, as follows:

04-59205 (E) 051104

Office	*Regular budget posts*	*Extrabudgetary posts*
United Nations Conference on Trade and Development	1 P-5, 1 P-3, 2 GS	-
United Nations Environment Programme	1 P-4, 1 P-3, 2 GS	1 D-1, 1 P-5, 1 P-4, 1 P-2, 4 GS
United Nations Centre for Human Settlements	1 D-1, 1 P-4, 2 GS	1 P-3
United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East	1 P-5, 2 GS	-
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights	1 D-2, 1 P-5, 2 P-4, 1 P-3, 4 GS	-
United Nations Office at Vienna/United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime	1 P-5, 1 GS	1 P-3, 1 GS
New York office of the regional commissions	1 D-1, 1 P-5, 1 P-4, 3 GS	-

3. Paragraphs 4 to 21 of the report discuss the representational and substantive contributions to the work programme of the parent offices. The Advisory Committee notes that, in some instances (e.g., the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UN-Habitat)), the description of these activities is very limited and would appear not to be concomitant with the number and level of staff resources available to the offices. The Committee was provided upon request with a detailed description of the substantive responsibilities of the New York office of the UN-Habitat.

4. The Advisory Committee requested information on measures taken to improve the effectiveness of the liaison offices and representation in New York. The Committee was informed that these offices were operating with the benefit of current information and communication technologies available at Headquarters.

5. The Advisory Committee was informed that representational activities of the liaison offices in New York described in the report could be broadly categorized in three main areas: (a) participation in meetings at the intergovernmental level; (b) participation in internal consultations, interdepartmental meetings within the Secretariat and inter-agency meetings; and (c) outreach activities in developing and maintaining contacts with United Nations-affiliated non-governmental organizations, foundations, private-sector organizations and academic institutions.

6. The Advisory Committee requested information on travel to New York of staff of organizations headquartered elsewhere with liaison offices or representation in New York. Information was provided on expenditure and the number of staff relating to official travel to New York in the biennium 2002-2003 (see annex to the present report). It was indicated that these trips were often combined with travel for other purposes and visits to other destinations. In the case of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), it was

indicated that travel to New York was limited to five trips of the Commissioner-General accompanied by one or two senior staff. Those trips related to the presentation to the Advisory Committee of the biennial budget of UNRWA, the presentation to the General Assembly of the annual report and the annual pledging conference.

7. **The Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly take note of the report of the Secretary-General.** The Committee intends to revert to the issue and examine the functions and level of staff resources of the liaison offices in New York in the context of its examination of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007.

Annex

Official travel to New York during the biennium 2002-2003

(In United States dollars.)

Body/type of meeting	*Regular budget*		*Extrabudgetary resources*	
	Number of staff	*Travel and related expenses*	*Number of staff*	*Travel and related expenses*
United Nations Office at Vienna/ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime				
Intergovernmental meeting	33	141 000	4	40 500
Interdepartmental and inter-agency meeting	42	160 100	16	66 100
Total	**75**	**301 100**	**20**	**106 600**
United Nations Conference on Trade and Development				
Intergovernmental meeting	32	134 000	-	-
Interdepartmental and inter-agency meeting	12	31 000	-	-
Total	**44**	**165 000**	**-**	**-**
United Nations Centre for Human Settlements				
Intergovernmental meeting	3	22 100	12	60 900
Interdepartmental and inter-agency meeting	3	16 900	7	27 600
Total	**6**	**39 000**	**19**	**88 500**
New York office of the regional commissions				
Intergovernmental meeting	27	177 000	-	-
Interdepartmental and inter-agency meeting	10	90 000	-	-
Total	**37**	**267 000**	**-**	**-**